

43rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT • ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR

For Immediate Release: March 11, 2016

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Jorgensen's Journal: With Voter ID Required, Act Now to Ensure You Can Cast a Ballot April 5th

Like it or not, Wisconsin voters will be required to show photographic identification to cast a ballot on April 5th.

There have been many stories in the news about people being turned away from the polls during the February 16th election. This means many of you need to act now, to ensure your vote counts.

Here's what you should do.

First, check your ID. Valid forms of voter ID include a Wisconsin Department of Transportation-issued driver's license or an identification card (available free upon request), a military ID card issued directly by a branch of the U.S. uniformed service, or a U.S. passport book or card. Any of these IDs can be used if they are unexpired or expired after November 4, 2014. You can also present a naturalization certificate that was issued less than two years before Election Day, a valid driver's license receipt or ID card receipt issued by the Wisconsin DOT, an ID card issued by a federally-recognized Indian tribe in Wisconsin, or a photo identification card issued by a Wisconsin accredited university, college or technical college that contains date of issuance, your signature, and an expiration date no later than two years after date of issuance. Also, the student ID must be accompanied by a separate document that proves enrollment. If you have any of these forms of ID, you're ready to vote.

If you find you need a voter ID, you'll have to get to a Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office. That's no easy task, when you consider these centers have very limited hours. There are no evening hours, and only the Milwaukee and Madison branches are open on Saturdays. If you're able to get to Beloit, Janesville, or Elkhorn, services are available Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. However, the Fort Atkinson DMV center will only be open once more between now and Election Day: on Thursday, March 24th from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

To get your free voter ID card at a DMV center, you should bring documents proving your citizenship, name, date of birth, identity, residency, and social security number. If you are missing documentation – and obtaining copies would cost you money – you can petition the DMV for verification. Be warned though, the DMV says it will try to process these petitions within a week, but it could take longer.

If this all seems complicated and burdensome to you, it's because it is. There is a real danger that thousands – maybe even tens of thousands of registered voters will be disenfranchised. I don't want you to be one of them. If you have questions, call me toll-free at (888) 534-0043 or email me at rep.jorgensen@legis.wi.gov. For more information, you can also visit the Government Accountability Board's website: www.gab.wi.gov.

Please act now – get that voter ID – ensure your voice is heard on April 5th.

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